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genuine success been achieved than that of this morning—never was success more thoroughly deserved. *The Woman of Samaria* will go a long way to increase the already high reputation of the Cambridge Professor, and, while certain to find favor with musicians, is no less sure to please that very numerous section of the public who are capable of appreciating music at once elegant, refined, and masterly. At the conclusion of the cantata the bonds of the absurd conventionality which forbids applause were burst asunder, and there was a most unmistakable demonstration of opinion, not only on the part of the audience but of the whole orchestra, one and all uniting in loud cries of "Ben-nett," which shortly brought the Cambridge Professor to the platform, when peal upon peal of "bravos" rang out from every one present. Among the audience I observed a great number of well-known London musical professors, who had come down expressly to hear the work, and who were by no means the least vehement in their expression of hearty approval.

ART MATTERS.

Probably the picture that is attracting the greatest attention in art circles just at present is Leutze's "Elaine," now on exhibition at Goupil's gallery. In choosing this subject, Mr. Leutze has done a bold thing; there are in the "Idyls" such a wealth of imagination, so much of poetic imagery, such a savor of the stately Middle Age, with its courteous chivalry and romantic spirit of adventure, that a man, to paint a picture illustrative of them, must do something out of the common run. It is, for instance, difficult to lay one's hand upon a satisfactory dramatization of any of Dickens's novels; many there have been, but in nearly all of them we miss the spirit—the sentiment of the author. How much more difficult, then, for the artist to thoroughly embody the spirit and sentiment of what are acknowledged to be the masterpieces of the great poet of the century. For this same rule holds good in art; we each form conceptions of the poet's ideal for ourselves; perhaps true, perhaps false; but these conceptions must, of necessity, bias our judgment of the artist's work; it is difficult for us to look with other eyes than our own, difficult to banish established ideas of our own, and look with the artist's eye, and receive his conception as the true one. Nay, it is next to impossible: and herein lies the fault of the majority of our art criticism. In looking at a picture such as "Elaine," then, it is necessary to banish all preconceived ideas of our own, and, if possible, endeavor to seize the conception of the painter, and judge the work from his standpoint, not ours.

Doré has illustrated "Elaine," and, in parts, with considerable vigor and dramatic power; but, as a whole, his illustrations may be considered as a failure. He has failed to catch the true spirit of the poem; failed to give to his pictures that weird spirit of romance which runs through it all; failed, in short, to sum up in one word, to be Tennysonian. If Mr. Leutze had failed, then, he would have failed in good company. Doré is looked upon—and justly—as one of the greatest draughtsmen of the age. His "Holy Bible," "Inferno," and "Don Quixote," are marvels of imagination and power. It is all the more remarkable, therefore, that his "Elaine" should have been such a comparatively weak work, that he should have invest-

ed it with so little attractiveness and genuine merit. Doré having failed, the greater must be the praise to the artist who has succeeded.

That Mr. Leutze's picture possesses many and rare excellencies, few will deny; that it is a thoroughly great picture, it is impossible to assert. We have here a more thorough carrying out of the poet's idea than has yet been given us; a more truly poetical and imaginative work. The development of a conception which must strike every one as being truthful, and at the same time powerful. It is all the more pity, therefore, that by a few technical errors Mr. Leutze should just miss the standard of thorough greatness which otherwise his picture would possess.

The picture illustrates the following lines of the poem:—

"—And the dead,
Steered by the dumb, went upward with the flood;
In her right hand the lily, in her left
The letter; all her bright hair screaming down;
And all the coverlid was cloth of gold
Laid on her waist, and she herself in white
All but her face: and that clear featured face
Was lovely, for she did not seem as dead,
But fast asleep, and lay as though she smiled."

Doré, in his illustration, has made the boat going across the picture diagonally. The old servitor is in the bow, the corpse in the stern; in the distance we catch a glimpse of the bend of the river, while to the right looms the towers of Astolar.

There are good points in this composition, but a grave error is made in subordinating the figures to the landscape. In Mr. Leutze's picture this is exactly reversed; the boat goes directly across the canvas, nearly filling it, and making the landscape an object of secondary interest. The old man is in the stern, a marvellously vigorous and life-like figure; in the bow lies Elaine. The cloth of gold spread over, a rich, black velvet pall beneath her; while over her head streams a banner upon which is a richly embroidered cross. Along the opposite shore the mist is rising, forming itself into fantastic forms of weeping figures; (an original and genuinely poetical conceit) while to the right, way up among the mountains, and basking in the sunlight, are the towers of Astolar. All this is good—grand. Almost perfect in composition, faultless in conception.

Now, let us see where the faults are. In "Godiva," Mr. Leutze fell into exactly the same error he has in "Elaine." There the hair of the female figure was of the same quality of color and texture as the horse's mane upon which she rode; here it is the same color and texture as the cloth of gold. Then, again, the face does not thoroughly convey the idea of death. True, there is some justification of this in the poet's description; but the poet is privileged to take a license which the painter may not. In poetry we look for and expect a certain liberty and figurativeness of expression; but in art this may not be; art deals with nature as well as poetry, and should give us nature in all her truthfulness. Another point, and I have done with fault-finding. The landscape is not all that it might be; there is in it—there is no other word that thoroughly expresses the idea—a peculiarly "Dutch" feeling; a hard, unpleasant purple tone which greatly mars the effect of the picture. True, there are good points in it; the glimpse of distant shore to the left, for instance; but as a whole, it is unsatisfactory; not thoroughly up to the high standard of the painter.

The merits of the picture are many; the strongly marked figure of the dumb servitor;

the happy conceit of the figures in the mist; the beautiful and elaborate work in the boat, cloth of gold, and pall, are all well worthy of remark and commendation; and, above all, the rare beauty and truthfulness of the conception is deserving of the very highest praise.

Taken altogether, it is a difficult matter to decide whether the merits do not overbalance the demerits, more especially as these demerits are of a purely technical character, and could be easily remedied in a second painting. At all events, Mr. Leutze may congratulate himself upon having painted a picture that must always excite interest and attention; and one, moreover, that more fully realizes the true feeling, sentiment, and intention of the poet, than any that has been painted in many years. PALETTE.

MATTERS THEATRIC.

Not a thunder-clap has startled the theatrical atmosphere during the past week, save the re-appearance of Ristori, at the French Theatre, in her famous character of "Medea," a rôle in which she has achieved a great success, both here and in Europe. There is a peculiar dignity in the sorrow and passion of the forsaken mother, which is eminently suited to Ristori's style of acting; throughout the entire play, the purely classic sentiment of the drama is never, for an instant, lost sight of. We have here Medea in all the intensity of her hatred, in all the wealth and tenderness of her great love. There is no artificiality in this pent-up rage, this whirlwind of indignation—the avenging Nemesis is before us, towering above the cowed and trembling Jason in the sublimity of her wrath. And then, anon, rage giving away to love, she is imploring for justice, for regard. Ristori fully realizes all this—fully comes up to the high standard of dramatic power required by the part. From beginning to end our interest never flags; we may not understand the language, but there is a magnetism, a spell in the great actress that fairly holds us spell-bound until the tragic termination of the play.

But it is too late in the day to write of Ristori's "Medea;" we all know what a grand, impressive piece of acting it is, and have sat entranced under its fascination ere this.

Last night Signor Bozzo made his *début* at the French Theatre, supporting Ristori in Pellico's tragedy of "Francesca da Rimini;" the performance, unfortunately, was too late for notice this week. Signor Bozzo comes to us with a good European reputation, and will doubtless prove a far more acceptable "leading gentleman" than he of last season.

At the O'lympic Jefferson is delightful; crowded houses, with his "Rip Van Winkle," a character in which he has won much applause, and deservedly; for, though by no means equal to Hackett's performance of the same rôle, there are touches of alternate humor, and pathos in it which are decidedly delightful and refreshing.

At the Broadway, Forrest is still drawing overflowing houses to witness his able interpretation of the "Legitimate."

"Under the Gaslight," at the New York Theatre, is as popular as ever. People would appear to be "under a spell" in regard to "Under the Gaslight"—a spell that forces them to crowd the theatre most uncomfortably every night.